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PEGGY DICKSON, A STORY OF HUMBLE LIFE.

THE longer a person lives, and the more that he knows of the world, the more reason will he have to believe that an immense deal of the misery which is endured in all classes of society is caused by imprudent marriages. This is, however, more particularly the case in the humbler walks of life than in the higher, where actual want is seldom one of the consequences of this kind of indiscretion. The consequences of an ill-assorted marriage do not seem to be at all thought of by either men or women in the working classes, till it be too late, and not till the parties learn by dreadful experience the disasters which follow in the train of a rashly got up match. On this subject, females in particular entertain exceedingly erroneous notions. They are courted, and they at once reason themselves into a belief that it is their *fate* to marry the person who is addressing them. If challenged for the folly of their conduct, they tell you that it is *ordained* that they shall marry this man, whoever he is, and that they cannot get past it; all which is just as stupid as if they were voluntarily to rush into the fire, and then pretend that it was the will of heaven that they should be burned. Women in this rank of life, as well as many in a higher sphere, are much too ready in listening to the stuff poured into their ears by those who approach them with a view to marriage. Their easiness on this score appears in some measure to arise out of a notion, that unless they now take advantage of the offer proposed for their acceptance, they may never have another opportunity of being a wife. They cannot be warned in too strong terms of the danger of such an idea. Better, a thousand times better, that they remain single all their lives, fulfilling the kindly duties of daughters, sisters, and aunts, to those who may have claims on their friendly offices, or even supporting themselves by some line of industry, no matter how humble, than entering into the solemn and binding contract to associate for life with a person who will render them unhappy, or who does not possess that character for steadiness, that integrity of principle, which can alone make any human being respected and loved.

No young and susceptible female imagination can picture the miseries of an ill-assorted marriage, either generally or in degree. Of one thing they are never aware, that a very considerable proportion of men take little or no thought how they may best support their wives and families. How a family is to be clothed, fed, lodged, and educated, does not enter into the calculation of one in ten who marry. They imprudently rush into matrimony, regardless of the results which will in all likelihood follow such a step; and the unhappy woman who becomes their wife, in a short time awakens to the sorry fact that she has got a husband who, provided he has his own gratifications satisfied, is very regardless either of her comfort or that of her children. That this is the truth with respect to a vast number of marriages in the humbler ranks of society in towns, I know from evidence pressed on my observation on all sides. Out of some twenty or thirty marriages of female servants which I chance to have heard of, I could with difficulty point out one that has been happy. In most of these instances, the women were either absolutely deserted by their husbands, or, what was infinitely worse, they had to labour to support them in idleness and profligacy. In some few instances the husbands luckily died, greatly to the relief of their wives, who were thenceforward at liberty to enter into domestic service, which they gladly and thankfully did. There is probably not a mistress of a respectable

household who could not produce a dozen instances of the same kind. Every one could mention how they are besieged by old servants with troops of children in a state of destitution, all which misery is produced by these unfortunate women having entered into marriage with wretches who have ruined and deserted them. Can there be any comparison drawn betwixt the comfort of remaining single, in an honourable though humble employment, and the discomfort and degradation of marriages leading to such deplorable consequences?

The following simple unvarnished story, with which I recently became acquainted, presents a tolerably correct specimen of the suffering endured by women in a humble rank of life who are unhappily led into marriages without due consideration. Margaret Dickson—or as she was more commonly and familiarly called Peggy—was brought up to execute the work of a domestic servant from about her twelfth year, when she had the misfortune to lose both her parents, and in the course of time she went through a number of respectable places. She was an active and good-looking girl, possessing excellent principles, and generally liked by her employers; in more than one of her situations she might have lived for any length of time in a state of comfort and comparative happiness, being kindly treated, and her wages the highest that were paid. But like many others in her class, and according to her own words, "she did not know when she was well off." She never liked to stay long in any place; fidgetted about from term to term, always seeking better situations, or leaving those she was in from the most trifling excuses. In one house she was not allowed to let a number of acquaintances call upon her; in another she was scolded for spending time in her own amusement when sent on errands; and in a third she was only allowed to have every alternate Sunday evening, not the whole day, to herself. These, and the like of these, she considered sufficient reasons to shift her situation, with a view to bettering her condition. Peggy's fate verified the old proverb that "an unhappy fish often gets an unhappy bait." By one of these luckless removes, she got into a situation where she had the liberty of going out every alternate Sunday from morning till night; this seemed to her a most delightful arrangement, for it permitted her to carry on a more extensive system of gossiping with persons in her own rank of life at houses where servants are in the habit of meeting each other, to talk over their own affairs and those of the families with which they are connected; by which practice, a steady-flowing under-stream of scandal is kept up through society. Whatever may have been the pleasure derived at the time from these gossipings, they paved the way to a very serious disaster, which was neither more nor less than Peggy's marriage with a workman in the town, Peter Yellowlegs by name. This would have been a commendable and prudent enough step, had she taken a little care to ascertain beforehand that her proposed husband was a man of steady industrious habits and sound moral principles. But this never entered into her mind; she persuaded herself that it was her *fate* to marry the person who thus addressed her, and, as a matter of course, neither sought advice nor made any kind of investigation whatever.

Behold Peggy Dickson now transformed into Mrs Yellowlegs, and her residence in a gentleman's family exchanged for a house of her own, consisting of a single apartment in an attic story in one of the tenth-rate back streets! Peggy was, however, a girl of some taste and tidiness; and although her domicile was

humble, she did every thing in her power to make it agreeable and acceptable to her husband. To the small stock of furniture she made some useful additions, and both by her exertions and her good will promised to make really an excellent housewife with the limited means at her command. But most unfortunately she had married a person who in no respect appreciated her efforts. Her husband was a man not decidedly bad; he would do nothing that would bring him within the scope of judicial punishment. But a man may be an utter wretch, and yet avoid the chance of coming under the hands of even the police. Peter was one of this description. He was addicted to indulge with companions in taprooms, and to loiter away his time with associates at the corners of the streets, or in any way that did not involve any thing like steady labour. In short, he was an idle, dissolute person, who married Peggy for what he considered a tolerably large fortune—something that would minister to his abominable gratifications. Peggy's tocher was, alas, but a small affair to have tempted any one to destroy her comfort for life. It consisted of about twelve pounds sterling, saved from her half-yearly wages, besides a blue painted trunk containing a tolerable wardrobe, not to speak of a pea-green silk bonnet with a veil worth five-and-twenty or thirty shillings. All this appeared an inexhaustible mine of wealth to Peter, who was not long in developing his real character.

For two or three weeks all went smoothly on, and he attended pretty regularly to his employment; but towards the end of the fourth week, his propensities could no longer be restrained. On the pretence of purchasing some articles necessary for their personal comfort, he wheedled Peggy out of the remains of her little savings. He went forth with some seven or eight pounds in his pocket—more riches than he had ever before had in his possession at one time—and did not make his appearance for a fortnight. This was a dreadful blow to Peggy's expectations of happiness in wedded life. It opened her eyes to the horrors of the condition she had brought herself into; but it is somehow difficult for a woman all at once to give up her attachment to the object who has gained her affections. A good and discreet wife will submit to a lengthened repetition of contumelies and ill usage before she can think seriously of parting from a husband whom she has vowed to love, cherish, and obey, whatever may be his errors, however great may be his crimes. The idea always predominates in her mind that his follies are but temporary, that he will repent of his misdeeds, and again be the worthy being which she once pictured him to be in her imagination. This is a delusion—a hope that is rarely realised. Very few husbands are ever altogether reclaimed, or become better than they have been. Such at least was the case in the present instance. Peggy's silent tears and bosom heaving with distress, her pining and beseeching looks, or her few words of remonstrance, were alike disregarded. In a short space of time her husband abandoned all regular employment, abstracting from her little household any portable article he could carry off from time to time, to pledge at the nearest pawnbroker's for an insignificant sum, and which he squandered on liquor in the company of his reckless associates. In the meantime, want pressed upon the humble dwelling, and Peggy only saved herself from starvation by making her necessities known to some of the families whom she had previously served, and who commiserated her deplorable fate. At length, in the midst of her distresses, she brought an infant into the world, to share in her sufferings, and to call upon her to put

forth additional exertions for the family's support. But for the kindness of a lady who had known her in better days, she must now inevitably have sunk under her calamities; this benevolent individual, however, interested herself so far as to procure some employment for her, for which she expressed her thankfulness in terms of untutored eloquence. Poor Peggy, however, still clung to her home, miserable and desolate as it was, and still, in the warmth and sincerity of her unfortunately-placed affections, continued to hope that her heartless husband would see the folly and wickedness of his ways, and would return to her and her child a penitent and reclaimed man. Vain hope! Idle anticipation!

One evening, as she was sitting by her little carefully emmised fire nursing her little one—on whom, to add to her misery, the hand of sickness was pressing heavily—sometimes reflecting on the painful contrast which her present and former condition presented, sometimes brooding over disappointed prospects and vanished dreams of happiness, mingled—for when will hope desert us?—with visions of future felicity, grounded on a fond anticipation of her husband's amendment; one evening, as we said, while thus employed, she was startled by a loud and boisterous knocking at the door. Her heart leaped from its place with terror, and in an instant her face grew deadly pale. She knew who it was that knocked—she knew it was her husband; but this, instead of allaying, only served to increase her fears; for she knew also, from the rudeness with which the wretched man assailed the door, that he was in that state when neither reason nor sympathy can reach the brutalised heart; she knew that he was intoxicated. The unhappy woman, however, obeyed the ruffian's summons. She opened the door, and Peter staggered into the middle of the apartment. Partly through fear, and partly from a feeling of affection for the lost man, which even his infamous conduct towards her could not entirely subdue, Peggy addressed him in the language of kindness, and endeavoured to soothe and allay the sullen and ferocious spirit which she saw gleaming in his reeling eye; for he was not in the last helpless stage of drunkenness, but just so far as to give energy and remorselessness to the demon spirit which the liquor he had swallowed had raised within him. "Peter," she said kindly, and making a feeble attempt to smile as she spoke, "Peter, you're all wet, my man; sit down here near the fire," and she placed a chair for him with one hand, while she supported her child with the other; "and I'll put on some more coals," she went on, "and bring you dry clothes, and get some supper ready for you, for I'm sure you must be hungry. Poor little Bobby's very unwell, Peter," she added.

"I don't care whether he's well or ill," roared out the drunken wretch; "nor do I want clothes from you, nor a supper either. I want money," he shouted out at the top of his voice; "and money I must have!"

"Money, Peter!" replied his terrified wife in a gentle tone; "you know I have no money. There's not a farthing in the house, nor has there been for many a day."

"Well, though you have no money, you have a shawl, which we can soon turn into money." Saying this, he forthwith went to a chest of drawers, and endeavoured to pull out that in which he knew the article he wanted was deposited; but the drawer was locked. This, however, was but a trifling obstacle. He seized a poker, smashed in the polished mahogany front of the drawer, and in an instant had his prey secured beneath his jacket, and was in the act of leaving the house with it when his unfortunate wife, having laid her sick child down on the bed for a moment, flew towards him, flung her arms about his neck, burst into a flood of tears, and imploringly besought him to think of her and her infant's condition, and not to leave the house, or deprive her of the only remaining piece of decent apparel that was left to her. And what was the reply of the monster to this affecting appeal? His only reply was a violent blow on the breast, by which he stretched his unfortunate wife senseless on the floor. Having performed this dastardly and villainous feat, he rushed out of the house, hastened to one of those monstrous abominations, a pawnbroker's shop, and from thence to the taproom, to rejoin the abandoned associates whom he had left there, until, as he himself said, he should "raise the wind."

Leaving the heartless ruffian in the midst of the

fierce debauch which the basely acquired means he now possessed enabled him to resume, we return to his miserable wife. Extended on the floor by the hand that ought to have protected her, the unhappy woman lay for a considerable time without either sense or motion, until recalled to consciousness by the piercing cries of her helpless infant, who lay struggling on the bed where she had placed him. But the consequences of the cowardly blow did not terminate with the restoration of her faculties. On the day following, she became alarmed by the acutely painful sensations she felt in the breast on which the ruffian's blow had alighted. This pain gradually increased from day to day, until it at length became so serious, and exhibited symptoms so alarming, that the unfortunate woman, urged by her neighbours, submitted her case to a surgeon at one of those friendly medical dispensaries which are established in different parts of the town. But it was too late, not, however, to save her life, but to save her from mutilation; for a dangerous cancer was already at work on her frame. Unwilling to expose her husband, she had delayed too long. Cancer had taken place, and had already made fearful progress in her breast.

The surgeon who attended her recommended her instant removal to the Infirmary, whither she accordingly went; and in two or three days after she entered that beneficent institution, the unfortunate woman, as the only means of saving her life, was subjected to the appalling operation of having her breast amputated. In six weeks afterwards, Peggy, with a dreadfully shattered constitution and emaciated form, left the Infirmary and returned to her own cold and desolate home, now ten times more desolate than it was before; for the callous brute, to whom in an evil hour she had united her destiny, instead of soothing her bed of affliction, had availed himself of her absence to strip the house of every article of the smallest value it contained, and, with the money thus raised, had continued in an uninterrupted course of dissipation during the whole time of his wife's confinement in the Infirmary. During all that time, too, he had never once visited her, or ever once inquired after either her or his child. His days, and the greater part of his nights likewise, he spent in public-houses, and only visited his home to commit some new act of robbery.

On Peggy's leaving the Infirmary, her first care was to visit the kind neighbour who had taken charge of her child during her confinement, and it was some alleviation to her misery to find, as she now did, that her little innocent had been carefully tended, and was at that moment in excellent health. But the unfortunate woman was not yet aware of the state of utter desolation to which her home had been reduced by her worthless husband; when, therefore, she saw its bare walls, its naked apartments and comfortless hearth, her heart sunk within her, and she wept bitterly. It was now that she felt the full extent of her misery, and saw, with unprejudiced eyes, the melancholy and striking contrast between her present and former condition. She could no longer conceal from herself the appalling fact that she was now fast verging towards the last stage of destitution, and was absolutely without a morsel of bread. Even hope threatened to desert her, and leave her a prey to a distracted mind and broken spirit. Poor Peggy, however, determined to make yet another effort for the sake of her child, and on his account to endeavour to fight her way a little farther through the world. With this view she sought for, and at length, though not without great difficulty, succeeded in obtaining employment as a washerwoman. But here a serious obstacle presented itself. How was she to dispose of her child? She could not both work and nurse; yet work she must, or both must inevitably starve.

From this painful predicament she extricated herself by determining on putting the child out to nurse, and devoting to its maintenance whatever portion of her little hard-earned gains that duty should demand. Poor Peggy, however, did not come to the resolution which stern necessity imposed upon her, of parting with her infant, without feeling all that a tender and affectionate mother must always feel in taking such a heart-rending step. It is true that she knew she could see her child at any time; for she resolved that, where-soever she placed it, it should be near her; but then she foresaw, also, that she must necessarily be often many hours absent from it, and a mother's fears pictured to her a thousand accidents which might befall the infant when she was not near to save or protect it. It was, however, impossible for her to do otherwise with the child than put it out to nurse, and she accordingly began to look out for a suitable person for that duty, and such a one, at least she thought so, she at length found; but she did not resign her infant to the charge of this person without having previously made the most minute and strict inquiries regarding

her character, and being perfectly satisfied, or at any rate so far satisfied as the testimony of those who knew the woman could make her; but, as the sequel will show, she was, after all, cruelly deceived, and so probably were those who had spoken to her good name. Having made arrangements with this woman regarding her child, and having put the latter under her care, Peggy commenced the laborious life to which she was now doomed; for her husband appeared to have wholly deserted her, as he had never looked once near the house after he had completed its spoliation.

For about twelve months after this, nothing occurred in Peggy's obscure and humble life worth recording. She toiled early and late with unwearied assiduity to support herself and her child, and felt a degree of happiness which she had not hoped ever again to enjoy, from the consciousness of being in the discharge of a sacred duty, and from a belief that her infant was sharing in the benefits of her exertions, by receiving all those attentions which the dearly-won earnings she appropriated to its maintenance were meant to procure for it. But at the end of the period above named, a circumstance occurred which showed how basely and wickedly she was deceived in the latter particular. One day, when washing in a gentleman's house where she was frequently employed, Peggy, in the temporary absence of the household servants, happened to answer a knock at the door, when a beggar woman with a child in her arms, wrapped closely up in a wretched cloak which she wore, presented herself, and solicited charity. Peggy, half intuitively, and half urged by her own parental feelings, gently removed the cloak to have a peep of the mendicant's child; but what was her amazement, her horror, on discovering that the child was her own! She uttered a scream of mingled surprise and terror, distractedly tore her infant from the wretch who had possession of it, and pressed it to her bosom with an energy and vehemence that seemed to indicate a fear of its being again taken from her. The mendicant in the meantime endeavoured to make her escape, but was seized and conveyed to the police-office under a charge of child-stealing. From the examination which followed, however, it appeared that the child had not been stolen, but borrowed, or rather hired at so much per day by the infamous woman in whose possession it was found, from the still more infamous person to whose care it had been confided by its mother; and it further appeared that the latter wretch had been long in the practice of letting out poor Peggy's child in the way just mentioned, which, we need not add, is a method frequently adopted for exciting charity and imposing upon the humane. Peggy of course lost no time in seeking out another guardian for her child, and was at length fortunate enough to find one on whom she could place full reliance. With this person the child remained a twelvemonth, at the end of which period Peggy succeeded, though not without great difficulty and much pleading, in procuring her little boy to be admitted into an orphan's hospital.

During all this time her worthless husband never once looked near her, or took the smallest interest either in her own fate or that of her child. She indeed for a long time did not know even where he was or what he was about, but at length heard that he was working in a quarry in the neighbourhood; and she was soon made aware of his vicinity, by his frequently coming to her in a state of intoxication to demand money of her, and she was often compelled to give it to him, to prevent him affronting her, or probably depriving her of her employment by his obstreperous conduct. Such torments, however, cannot last for ever. Peter was at length found to be somehow implicated in a drunken scuffle at Crumond, in which one of the parties was deprived of or lost a few shillings. Whether Peter was guilty or not in this affair, is of little consequence. He was seized by a sheriff's officer, and removed to the county jail at Edinburgh. Up to this point of Peter's career, he had been simply a worthless wretch, and perhaps not past being reclaimed; but being now lodged in one common receptacle with twenty villains more or less criminal, for a period of about three months previous to trial, he embraced the opportunity of becoming a thoroughly confirmed blackguard. A notorious swindler who happened to be confined in the same ward, acted as instructor in crime to the party, and Peter was a most apt scholar. On his trial he was not convicted, and was therefore set at liberty; but his excellent schooling in jail soon led him into a desperate affair of housebreaking, for which he was in due time tried and dispatched to Botany Bay.

In the midst of these troubles and trials, something like better fortune smiled on poor Peggy. A respectable elderly gentleman, a bachelor, to whom she had been warmly recommended by one of the ladies who were in the habit of employing her, took her into his service, and here for two years she found a peaceful and comfortable home, but at the end of this period the old gentleman died, and Peggy was again thrown upon the world, friendless and houseless; and to add to her misfortune, the changes which even a very short period rarely fails to bring about, had during the two years of her service effected such alterations in the families by which she was formerly employed, that they were no longer open to her. The unfortunate woman was now therefore even worse off than she had been at any period of her miserable life since she married, and would have utterly starved if she had not obtained some trifling employment in the way of washing shop floors, three of which she

cleaned out at sixpence a-week each, and a writer's office at a shilling, and this was all she had now to live upon.

Inadequate as these means were, Peggy was now thankful of them. Half-a-crown, however, was but a miserable sum to live upon for an entire week, to clothe her, feed her, and pay house rent. It could procure her none of those comforts to which she had been accustomed when in service, and it was a sum on which she would not then have placed much value; but times were changed with her, and poignantly did she feel this, and bitterly did she regret the unhappy step which had at once carried her from a comfortable and happy position, and plunged her into that misery with which she was now struggling. As she thought of these things, poor Peggy's heart sunk within her, and she began to despair of ever again enjoying happiness in this world. Reflections such as these preyed so much on the unfortunate woman's mind as nearly to unfit her for the little work she had to do, and threatened to extend her on a bed of sickness; and, added to all this, what a change had taken place in her personal appearance! Her once trim and well-shaped form was now thin and emaciated: her dress, though still clean and tidy, bore but too evident indications of the extreme poverty which had overtaken her, and her once ruddy and cheerful countenance was pale, haggard, and deeply marked with the grave melancholy lines of thought. No one, in short, could now have known the once pretty Peggy; the little, lively, handsome servant girl. But although poor Peggy had now begun to despair of ever being better, providence had not deserted her.

On passing through the market-place of the city on a day when it is frequented by people from the country, Peggy was suddenly accosted by a decent elderly man in such a dress as is generally worn by the smaller order of farmers. This person was Peggy's uncle. He was in easy circumstances, but having been highly displeased with his niece's marriage (against which he had remonstrated in vain), in consequence of his having heard very unfavourable but too well-founded reports regarding the character and habits of her husband, he had withdrawn his countenance from her, and she, aware of this, had never once thought of seeking his assistance in her distress. Although of a somewhat stern temper, Peggy's uncle was yet a worthy and kind-hearted man, and his unfortunate niece's sadly altered appearance, which his keen eye at once detected on thus accidentally meeting her, instantly excited his sympathy, and banished all his resentment, and determined him in the step he now took. "How are ye, Peggy?" said the old man, taking her by the hand and looking earnestly but kindly in her pale emaciated face; "dear me, lassie," he went on, "what's the matter wi' ye? Ye're sairly changed sin' I saw ye last; ye're no like the same woman; are ye weel enouch?" Peggy made no reply, but burst into tears. "Come awa, lassie," said her uncle; "this is no a place for giein' vent to feelings o' that kind; come in by here, and tak some kind o' refreshment, and we'll speak over things at leisure, and awa frae the public ee." Saying this, he led Peggy into an adjoining public-house, and there learnt the whole story of her wedded life.

The old man's feelings gave way before the recital of the humble but affecting tale; a tear started into his eye; he took Peggy by the hand, and told her that his house was open to her whenever she chose to enter it, and added, that he thought, under all the circumstances, the sooner she did this the better. In short, before the uncle and niece parted, it was fixed that Peggy should on the very next day repair to Braefoot, her uncle's farm, which she accordingly did; and as he was a widower, and without any daughters of his own, she soon showed herself to be worthy of all the kindness shown her by her relative, by the activity she displayed in the superintendence of his dairy and household affairs, of which she obtained the sole and uncontrolled management, and thus once more found herself in the enjoyment of comfort, and of, at least, comparative happiness.

With a due consideration for her maternal feelings, as well as for "the credit of the family," Peggy's uncle speedily removed her child from the charitable institution in which he had been placed, and brought him home to his own house, greatly to the delight both of mother and son. Only one cankering care now preyed on Peggy's mind, and that arose from the possibility of her husband returning to his native country to blight her prospect of future quietude. Even from this unlikely occurrence, however, she was at length happily relieved, by intelligence of Peter's death. For repeated misdemeanours in the family of a respectable settler near the town of Sidney, he underwent summary transportation to the penal settlement at Macquarrie's Harbour. Here, among a gang of desperate felons, loaded with chains, and labouring ten hours a-day to the knees in water, he was not long in sinking under the effects of a broken moral and physical constitution. The report of her husband's unhappy death was not unfelt or unwept by our humble heroine, but the load of uneasiness which was now removed from her mind soon led her to be grateful for the relief; and she was with little difficulty brought to agree with her uncle and the sympathising neighbours around, that her loss was, on the whole, "a light dispensation."

Such is the story of Peggy Dickson; but let it be recollected by those of her class who may read it, that

while all of them are liable to the miseries which she endured, by entering into a rash and inconsiderate marriage, few have such an uncle to rescue them from the last consequences of that unhappy step, as she had the good fortune to be blessed with.

POPULAR INFORMATION ON SCIENCE.

ZOOPLYTES.

ZOOPLYTE is a term compounded from two Greek words signifying an animal and a plant, and is applied to define a most remarkable class of creatures partaking at once of the principle of animal life with a certain kind of sense, and the quality of a growing vegetable. Nothing within the range of natural history possesses so interesting and wonderful a character as this strange half-animal half-plant; and as thousands of our readers have most likely never heard of such curious demonstrations of Creative power, we intend here to say a few words on the subject.

Hitherto not much has been known about zoophytes; but in a memoir presented by Mr Graham Dalyell to the late meeting of the Scientific Association in Edinburgh, much light was thrown on their nature and habits, at least of those found in Scotland. In order to ascertain the true nature of zoophytes, this gentleman had kept many different kinds alive during several years, which survived, fed, and bred in his possession, as in their native abodes; from whence he was enabled to observe various important facts escaping the notice of preceding naturalists.

All zoophytes are aquatic; they bear the strictest resemblance to shrubs in growing by a stem, boughs, and branches, filled with an internal pith, and are covered with hundreds or even thousands of cells, each containing a living animal, whose body is connected with the pith. When at rest, the animal reposes in its cell; when active, it stretches forth its body, provided with twenty or thirty feelers serving as fingers, instrumental in seizing and conveying the prey to the mouth, which is in the centre of them. These animals are of the nature of the polypus, or may be compared in miniature to the sea anemone, or animal-flower, common on our shores. Nothing can be more curious or beautiful than such a shrub, bearing a multitude of animals in full activity in every part, like so many living flowers. One zoophyte of the genus *Sertularia* was found by Mr Dalyell in the Firth of Forth, nearly a yard high, which is triple the size of any described by authors. This genus *Sertularia* propagates in a singular manner. Prolific specimens bear a number of minute bladders, containing spherules like eggs, and have been mistaken for such, producing the young zoophyte, by all preceding naturalists. Mr Dalyell proved that this is erroneous; that as the spherules approach maturity, they resolve into small white or yellow animals of an unknown race, somewhat triangular and flattened, which issue from the mouth of the bladder or vesicle. They die soon afterwards, and remain undissolved; but in nearly about the same place a young zoophyte grows, consisting of a short stem with a single cell and its polypus. This experiment was often repeated, and he obtained a whole forest of zoophytes from their origin.

Another zoophyte, called the *Tubularia*, rooted on shells, rocks, and stones, by a stem above a foot high, has a scarlet head resembling a beautiful pink. Several bunches resembling clusters of grapes, forming its eggs, are borne externally on the head. Each egg on attaining maturity drops out of its cluster, and, falling below, is hatched into a young zoophyte. At first this is a head only; it is endowed for some time with the faculty of moving from place to place; and after taking up a position, the stem grows downwards, by which it is then permanently rooted to the same spot. A different kind, called the *Fusaria* or sea-mat, resembles a leaf, one or both sides of which are composed entirely of cells like a slipper, each inhabited by an animal concealed within when at rest, and stretching out when active, but fixed by the lower extremity.

Mr Dalyell exhibited to the learned association a very remarkable living creature, also explaining its structure and properties. This consists of a flat sole or basis, sustaining about three hundred and fifty smaller animals, somewhat of the polypus tribe, incorporated with it, and each endowed with separate sensation and action, but denied the power of locomotion, which belongs to the basis exclusively. Over this they have no influence; all being carried along at once when it moves. But its only faculty is motion. The body of each of this numerous society is a short tube, crowned by a crescent-shaped head, completely bordered by one hundred very active feelers or tentacula, which are continually employed. The whole product is about two inches long, and of a fine transparent green colour. A number of flat brown eggs, with a hard shell and yellow contents, occupy the substance of the basis or sole. As the creature dies and decomposes towards the end of the season, the eggs are liberated, and float five or six months on the water, when they open, and produce a single polypus, with its crescent-head and border of feelers from each. Many others quickly originate from the substance of this young animal, which at length re-

sembles the general structure of the parent. Though each individual polypus of the largest specimen be provided with its own mouth, gullet, stomach, and intestine, no distinct organs can be recognised in the mass forming the common foundation of all, and with which all are incorporated. This remarkable product is found in Duddingstone Loch, near Edinburgh, and in Coldingham Loch, Berwickshire. The fine specimen exhibited by Mr Dalyell came from a pond at Binns House, in Linlithgowshire.

Whether a zoophyte is one animal only, or is composed of a thousand, in its ultimate luxuriance it originates as a single polypus, or a single cell with its polypus. Evolution of the others follows. A new kind of marine polypus was described as of a very different nature, whose original white colour is tinged by the quality of its food. It breeds by the young budding externally from the side in shapeless lumps, then withdrawing from the parent, and maturing in symmetry. A group of these animals was preserved under experiment and observation during five years.

The author of the memoir also preserved an *actinia* or sea anemone during a long time. In the course of six years it produced between two and three hundred young, which also bred on attaining maturity. The embryos of this animal are carried in the tips of its hollow and transparent feelers; they can be withdrawn entirely, or transferred from one to another, and after this extraordinary kind of gestation, are finally produced by the mouth. A tip containing an embryo having been amputated, the embryo survived five years after extraction, fed and grew and bred in its turn. The actinia is a most voracious creature, and after feeding greedily, the food is rejected in the form of a ball. No living creature it can overpower escapes its grasp.

Many other interesting topics were brought under discussion, some tending to show how admirably the structure of living creatures is adapted to their necessities, and that the wisdom and power of the great Creator shines in nothing more conspicuously than in the wonderful provision designed for preserving their race. The author demonstrated how vain it was to attempt gaining a just knowledge of such beings as he had described, without studying them long and attentively in their native element; and assured the learned audience, that, from many years' experience, he was satisfied that rare, curious, and interesting objects would be found equally abundant in Scotland as in any country of the universe.*

PINE FORESTS.

[BY SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER.]

THE Scotch fir—the *Pinus Sylvestris*—when in perfection, I think a very picturesque tree, though we have little idea of its beauty. It is generally treated with great contempt. It is a hardy plant, and therefore put to every servile office. If you wish to screen your house from the south-west wind, plant Scotch firs, and plant them close and thick. If you want to shelter a nursery of young trees, plant Scotch firs, and the phrase is, you may afterwards weed them out as you please. This is ignominious. I wish not to rob society of these hardy services from the Scotch fir; nor do I mean to set it in competition with many of the trees of the forest, which in their infant state it is accustomed to shelter: all I mean is to rescue it from the disgrace of being thought fit for nothing else, and to establish its character as a picturesque tree. For myself, I admire its foliage, both the colour of the leaf and its mode of growth. Its ramification, too, is irregular and beautiful, and not unlike that of the stone pine, which it resembles also in the easy sweep of its stem, and likewise in the colour of the bark, which is commonly, as it attains age, of a rich reddish brown. The Scotch fir indeed, in its strippling state, is less an object of beauty. Its pointed and spiry shoots, during the first years of its growth, are formal; and yet I have sometimes seen a good contrast produced between its spiry points and the round-headed oaks and elms in its neighbourhood. When I speak, however, of the Scotch fir as a beautiful individual, I conceive it when it has outgrown all the improprieties of its youth—when it has completed its full age—and when, like Ezekiel's cedar, it has formed its head among the thick branches. I may be singular in my attachment to the Scotch fir—I know it has many enemies—but my opinion will weigh only with the reasons I have given.

We agree with Mr Gilpin, to the fullest extent, in his approbation of the Scotch fir as a picturesque tree. We, for our parts, confess, that when we have seen it towering in full majesty, in the midst of some appropriate Highland scene, and sending its limbs abroad with all the unconstrained freedom of a hardy mountaineer, as if it claimed dominion over the savage regions around it, we have looked upon it as a very sublime object. People who have not seen it in its native climate and soil, and who judge of it from the wretched abortions which are swaddled and suffocated in English plantations, amongst deep, heavy, and eternally wet clays, may well call it a wretched tree; but when its foot is among its own Highland heather, and when it stands freely on its native knoll of dry gravel, or thinly covered rock, over which its roots wander afar in the wildest reticulation, whilst its tall, furrowed, and often gracefully sweeping red

* For the bulk of the information in the above article, we are directly indebted to the friendly attention of Mr Dalyell.

and grey trunk, of enormous circumference, rears aloft its high umbrageous canopy, then would the greatest sceptic on this point be compelled to prostrate his mind before it with a veneration which perhaps was never before excited in him by any other tree. The Scottish fir pastures entirely on the surface soil, and never sends its roots downwards. All it wants, therefore, is dryness below. It thrives by the sparkling rill, the mountain torrent, or the wide and rapid river; but though nature often sows it in the bog, it is there stunted in its growth, and soon sickens and dies.

Though we call the Highlands of Scotland the native country of this tree, we do so only so far as Great Britain is concerned, for there is perhaps no tree which is more extensively diffused over the world. That part of Europe which lies above the fifty-fifth degree of latitude is covered with immense pine forests, which are in a great measure composed of this species. In the centre of Europe, it is to be found on the Pyrenees, the Tyrolian, Swiss, and Vosgean mountains, and in North America it abounds. With the exception of the cedar and the larch, the Scottish fir produces better timber than any of the pine family. That which comes from Norway and the Baltic, and from the sides of the river Memel, in Poland, called red deal, or Memel fir, is very durable, but not more so than the timber of our Highland trees. Pine timber is best in the colder situations. In the warmer regions, it contains a great deal of white, or sap-wood. At what time the sap-wood is transformed into durable or red wood has not yet been determined by vegetable physiologists. Though most writers believe that the ligneous matter is deposited in the second year, we are disposed to doubt the fact. More than a dozen layers of sap-wood may be counted on some trees; and, what is a very interesting observation, where trees have been much exposed to the mid-day sun, the whole southern half of the tree is sometimes found to be little better than sap-wood, whilst the northern half may contain only a layer or two at the circumference.

There can be no doubt that the whole hilly regions of Great Britain and Ireland were at one time covered with forests, which in a great measure consisted of pine. About a century and a half ago, that elevated part of the north of Ireland which extends through the counties of Donegal and Tyrone, was covered with one vast pine forest, of which hardly a vestige now remains; and, indeed, short as the period is since its disappearance, it is not now very well understood how it was destroyed, or what became of it. Many fragments of the Scottish pine forests still remain; but even these have been very unmercifully slaughtered, in consequence of the high price to which Baltic timber arose during the late wars. There are still the remains of the Rannoch forest, on the confines of the great counties of Perth, Inverness, and Argyle. The roots that exist, and the occasional single trees and groups which may still be seen here and there, in situations not easily accessible, show that this forest stretched far and wide across the country, meeting with those which now remain on the Dee, the Spey, the Findhorn, the Ness, the Beaulieu, as well as with those connected with the Glen-mor-na-albin, or great Caledonian Glen, and with the Glengarry, Lochiel, Glen Nevis, and more western sylvan districts. Of these remnants none were more extensive, or more esteemed for their timber, than the forests of the Spey and the Dee. The Abernethy forests still continue to furnish a great quantity of very fine timber. At one time the demand for it was so trifling, that the laird of Grant got only one shilling and eightpence for what one man could cut and manufacture in a year. In 1730, a branch of the York Building Company purchased £7000 worth of timber; and, by their improved mode of working it up, by saw-mills, &c. and their new methods of transporting it in floats to the sea, they introduced the rapid manufacture and removal of it which afterwards took place throughout the whole of the sylvan districts. About the year 1786, the Duke of Gordon sold his Glenmore forest to an English company for £10,000. This was supposed to be the finest fir wood in Scotland. Numerous trading vessels, some of them above five hundred tons, were built from the timber of this forest; and one frigate, which was called the Glenmore. Many of the trees felled measured eighteen and twenty feet in girth; and there is still preserved, at Gordon Castle, a plank nearly six feet in breadth, which was presented to the Duke by the company. But the Rothiemurchus forest was the most extensive of any in that part of the country. It contained above sixteen square miles. Alas! we must now, indeed, say that it was, for the high price of timber hastened its destruction. It went on for many years, however, to make large returns to the proprietor—the profits being sometimes above £20,000 in one year. The forests of Glenmore and Rothiemurchus, though belonging to different estates, were so united as to form in reality one continuous forest, and they are now equally denuded of all their finest timber. We remember this a region of such wildness, where its calm silent lakes were for ever reflecting, from their dark bosoms, the endless forests of pine, which rose distance after distance over the broken sides of their minor hills and more lofty mountains, and where the scenes we wandered through were such as the florid imagination of a poet might fancy, but could not describe. Alas! the numerous lakes, and the hills, and the mountains are yet there, but the forests shall no more bewilder both the steps

and the imagination of the stranger, till time shall give the same aged forms to those younglings which are every where springing up in the room of their ancestors. The Glenmore forest is fast replenishing itself. Nothing could be more savagely picturesque than that solitary scene when we visited it some years ago. At that time many gigantic skeletons of trees, above twenty feet in circumference, but which had been so far decayed at the time the forest was felled as to be unfit for timber, had been left standing, most of them in prominent situations, their bark in a great measure gone—many of them without leaves, and catching a pale unearthly looking light upon their grey trunks and bare arms, which were stretched forth towards the sky like those of wizzards, as if in the act of conjuring up the storm which was gathering in the bosom of the mountains, and which was about to burst forth at their call.*

A FEW DAYS IN FRANCE.

PERE LA CHAISE.

IT was on a fine clear sunshiny morning in September that we found ourselves seated in a cabriolet, and driving along the Boulevards in the direction of the cemetery of Père la Chaise, which may be about three miles distant from the centre of Paris, in a north-easterly direction. In passing along towards the suburbs in this direction, you have occasion to cross the open space once occupied by the Bastille, a place which all strangers will look upon with no small degree of interest. Of this once famous state prison there is now not the smallest remaining vestige, unless the fosse or wet ditch that once surrounded it be considered such, which is now devoted to the purpose of a basin to the canal St Martin. The open area where the Bastille stood is at present in a confused state, and in the course of being distinguished by a tall monumental erection. A huge plaster cast of an elephant, painted of a dark colour, and in a state approaching to decay, stands close by. According to the design of Napoleon, an elephant in bronze, of which this is the type, was to have been erected on the summit of an arch at this spot, while from its mouth or trunk was to spout a fountain of water; but the design has been laid aside, and the figure of the elephant, which is of gigantic proportions, is consequently going to ruin.

Paris possesses five public burial-grounds; none, however, is equal in point of interest or beauty to that of Père la Chaise, which, though described a hundred times already by those who travel to make books, may be described once more for the benefit of those who have not had the good fortune to see any of these accounts. All the ordinary ideas of burying-grounds among us are inapplicable to this famous cemetery. It is not an enclosed field strewn with clumsy tombstones, and tangled all over with nettles, hemlocks, and other kinds of rank vegetation: it is a tract of ground measuring a hundred acres in extent, composing the face and brow of a beautiful hill lying to the north-east of Paris, a view of which it completely commands. On approaching it, or looking towards it at a distance, it exhibits the prospect of a plantation or forest, and it is only on a close inspection below the growing wood that you find the ground dedicated to the purpose of sepulture. This beautiful rising ground was formerly the chief seat of the Jesuits' establishment in France, when presided over by Père la Chaise, confessor of Louis XIV. After the suppression of that order of monks, the ground passed through several hands, till at length it was laid out as a public cemetery in 1804. It is now surrounded by walls, and from the chief entrances various broad walks diverge in different directions, forming cool shady walks amidst the trees.

The singularly advantageous situation of this retired spot, upon the slope of a hill, apart from the bustle of the city, surrounded by luxuriant vallies, and commanding an extensive view of a picturesque and glowing landscape, has occasioned it to be chosen by the most distinguished personages as the place of their interment; consequently, no Parisian cemetery can vie with that of Père la Chaise in the number and beauty of its monuments. The visitor is astonished at the wonderful variety in the construction, the design, and the ornamenting of the places of sepulture. Some of them, of large dimensions and elegant architecture, built of fine white sandstone, are in the form of temples, sepulchral chapels, funeral vaults, pyramids, obelisks, and pavilions; others present altars, urns, and tombs of diversified forms, variously ornamented; many are surrounded by little

palings of wood, planted with flowers and shrubs, and distinguished by crosses, on which are inscribed the names of those who remain reposed beneath. The first feeling which affects the stranger on beholding these outward symbols of affection and regret, is that of surprise—surprise at the prodigious lavishness of attention on the part of relatives, not only in erecting such expensive memorials of their friends, but in afterwards preserving their tombs from decay. Except in some particular instances, probably in those cases where those who once paid attention to the tombs are themselves now no more, all the places of burial are kept in neat order; you find the little enclosures trimly cultivated; the lines of boxwood green and nicely pruned, and the flowers blossoming as if in a well-kept garden. All this is accomplished either by the personal care of relatives, or by a gardener whom they employ for the purpose. Among such a vast variety of tombs, every species of taste, good and bad, is of course to be found. Some places of interest overcome you with their exquisite simplicity; others give offence by the tawdriness of their ornament. One particularly struck me in the course of my rambles. It was a neat raised enclosure, planted with a few flowers, and having no ornamental erection save a small black wooden cross, on which was painted the single word "ZOE." How much was told in that word! Another inscription which attracted my notice, may be taken as a sample of the feeling often expressed in this city of tombs. It was as follows:—"Angélique Virginie Panier, épouse de M. Ls. Wagon; à l'âge de 34 ans. Ah! ma Virginie, tu es pendant quinze ans le charme de ma vie. Ah! quelque soit l'étendue de ma douleur. Jamais mes regrets n'égalent l'amour que j'ai pour toi." Which may be translated thus: "Angélique Virginie Panier, wife of M. L. Wagon, aged 34 years. Ah! my Virginie, thou wert during fifteen years the charm of my life. Ah! why should I pour forth my grief! Never shall my regret equal the love which I bore for thee." This would be thought far too sentimental for an English burial-ground.

Most of the more simple enclosures are purchased or rented only for a limited time, I believe six years, after which they are liable to be transferred to others if the lease be not renewed. Tombs of a more substantial nature are generally erected on ground purchased for ever, and in these cases I observed the words *A Perpetuité* engraved upon the stone. Notwithstanding the abundant display of really correct sentiment in this large collection of tombs, the phlegmatic Englishman is frequently tempted to smile at the grotesque nature of the emblems of grief which are on all sides visible. On many of the larger monumental stones there are projections like chimney-pieces, on which are placed artificial flowers, wax dolls, and other figures, covered over with inverted crystal jars to preserve them from the weather, and bearing a tolerably close resemblance to the shop window of some dealer in toys and fancy goods. In what are termed the sepulchral chapels, which are stone-built tombs, perhaps measuring six feet by four, and covered overhead, with handsome doors of florid bronze, you will perceive these tinsel shows carried to a still greater length. On the projecting shelf, which is evidently intended for an altar, there stand a couple of wax candles ready for lighting; and among other things, a number of chaplets made of a small yellow flower, or others of a pure white colour.* On each side of the little apartment are placed one or two rush-bottomed chairs; so that, in point of fact, the tomb of the dead is converted into an arbour for the living, when they are pleased to visit the spot. Ridiculous as all this may seem to many, it is impossible to pass by the various enclosures without acknowledging that no small degree of good taste is displayed, both in the erection and decorations of the sepulchres. The sculpture and carving are admirably executed, and even the commonest of the tombstones possess an air of classic elegance, which will be in vain searched for in Great Britain. I would certainly say that none of our monumental stonecutters come up to those in Paris, and that they could do nothing which would more tend to advance them in their profession than to visit Père la Chaise, and study the models there placed before them. The same superiority is visible with respect to the beautiful bronze and iron work of the doors to the monuments, which are well worth copying by some of our artificers.

In whatever direction the visitor turns on entering the gateway, he will, by careful examination, discover the resting-places of persons of note. The divisions on the right and left of the avenue opposite the entrance, contain the tombs of several distinguished painters and sculptors. By pursuing a path leading to the right, and beyond a spot dedicated to the burial of the Jews, the stranger discovers perhaps the most interesting and picturesque monument in the cemetery—namely, the tomb of Abelard and Heloise. It consists of a sepulchral chapel of Gothic architecture, formed out of the ruins of the celebrated abbey of the Paraclet, founded by Abelard, and of which Heloise

* These chaplets, or small ornamental hoops, are sold by women at the entrances to the cemetery for five or six sous each, and are purchased by those who come with the pious wish to do honour to the dead. On some tombs there are piles of these chaplets, many of which, faded with the weather, are surrounded by others freshly formed and deposited. The chaplets of a pure white hue are made from the scrapings of whalebone. Both within and near the precincts of Père la Chaise there are stonecutters' establishments, at which monumental stones are executed.

* Gilpin's Forest Scenery, edited by Sir T. D. Lauder.

was the first abbe. Its form is a parallelogram, fourteen feet in length by eleven in breadth, and its height is twenty-four. A steeple, twelve feet in elevation, rises out of the roof, and four smaller steeples, exquisitely sculptured, terminate the angles. Fourteen columns six feet in height, ornamented with diversified capitals, support ten arches, and the latter are surmounted by cornices wrought in field-flowers. Other ornaments consist of bas-reliefs, roses, and medallions, with representations of divers figures. Abelard is represented in a recumbent posture, with the hands joined, and by his side is the statue of Heloise. This tomb has been removed hither from its original situation.

I have here only room to notice a few of the most remarkable tombs in various parts of the cemetery. Those of General Murray and Rear-Admiral Colbert; the aeronaut Charles, successor of Montgolfier; Madame Dufrenoy, surnamed the tenth muse of the age; the celebrated chemist Fourcroy—a bust of marble; Van-Spaendonck, painter of flowers; Tarchi, an Italian musician; Messier, a distinguished astronomer; Bernardin de St Pierre, author of *Paul and Virginia*, and other works; Gretry, the celebrated music composer; Aignan, translator of Homer; the celebrated Delille, surnamed the French Virgil—a plain tomb of large dimensions, surrounded by pilasters, and bearing no inscription but his name; the Marquis de Boufflers, author of several esteemed works—an obelisk surmounted by an urn; the celebrated Talma—a plain monument without inscription; Madame Blanchard, who perished, July 6, 1819, by her balloon taking fire; Persius—a pyramid; Valentin Haüy, who taught the blind to read by means of characters in wood; Marshal Kellerman; Coulaingourt, Duke de Vicenze—a column of white marble; the Abbé Sicard, director of the deaf and dumb school; Marshal Davoust—a pyramid of granite; Marshal Lefebvre—a magnificent sarcophagus of white marble, with two figures of Fame crowning the bust of the marshal in relief, a serpent, the emblem of immortality, encircling his sword, and the inscriptions "Soldat, Marshal Duc de Dantzick, Pair de France; *Fleurus, Avant-Garde, Passage du Rhin, Alterkirken, Dantzick, Montmirail*;" Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling—a pyramid of white marble; General Foy—a superb monument erected by national subscription, consisting of a massive sepulchral chapel surmounted by a temple, in which is seen a statue of the general in the act of addressing the Chamber of Deputies; the Marchioness de Beaubarnais, sister-in-law of the Empress Josephine, and mother of Madame Lavalette; Quintin Crauford, a Scotch gentleman, celebrated for his love of the arts, sciences, and letters—an antique chapel; Molière—a sarcophagus of stone, supported by four columns, and surmounted by a vase; La Fontaine, the fabulist—a cenotaph crowned by a fox in black marble; the celebrated astronomer Laplace—a tomb of white marble, from which rises an obelisk surmounted by an urn, and the inscriptions, "*Mécanique Céleste, System du Monde, probabilités*;" the Baron Dupin, the celebrated French statistical writer. But it is quite impossible to give any thing like a catalogue of the tombs of distinguished individuals in this extraordinary cemetery. I noticed the monuments of many of those sculptors, painters, authors, dramatists, statesmen, and generals, whose names are familiar in this country, which it would require several pages to describe. Along the brow of the rising ground there is a broad grass avenue, from which a most delightful prospect may be obtained of the city, and the richly wooded hills of St Cloud and Sevres beyond. At this spot, and facing down the central avenue to the gateway, stands a handsomely built chapel in the Grecian style, with a flight of steps leading to the interior, and surmounted by a white marble cross. Curiosity induced me to look into this edifice, which was open at the time of my visit, and I perceived that it was furnished with an altar, at which a solitary priest was performing some kind of religious ceremony—perhaps a mass for the dead. The audience consisted of three old women, kneeling as usual on rush-bottomed chairs.

I do not imagine that any stranger, however austere, can wander through the shady and melancholy groves of Père la Chaise, without having the harsher feelings of his nature softened, and his mind improved. There is a charm in these secluded alleys among the tombs—in this city of the dead—which is calculated to refine our hearts—to meliorate our prejudices. Here talent, virtue, and energy of character, have their posthumous reward. Here repose the ashes of the honoured dead—of all that was bright and glorious. Here also does affectionate remembrance find scope for the overflowing of its grief. Here may the stranger see—and see with comfort and satisfaction—what is effected to perpetuate the recollection of both great and small. How much does all this differ from the usages of our own country! With us the dead are truly for ever gone from amongst us. Shut up in barred cages in an ill-kept enclosure, under the guardianship of a surly keeper, their graves are rarely visited or regarded. Yet why should it be otherwise? As a nation, we are not worthy of free admission to the churchyards. We do not know how to conduct ourselves with propriety in such a place. If there be any sculpture, we must destroy it, and the more exquisitely finished it is, the more care which has been bestowed upon it, the more certainly shall we knock it in pieces. There is surely a pleasure in breaking,

tearing, destroying, and even in stealing, which no nation understands so well as we do. Can we therefore for a single moment contemplate the possibility of a Père la Chaise in Great Britain? Is it at all probable that the moveable ornaments and sculptured decorations of tombs, which I have been describing, would be suffered to remain uninjured, or remain at all, in a cemetery in this country, if that cemetery were as free to all as the public street? Not in the least probable. Were Père la Chaise in the vicinity of any large town in Britain, it would speedily be stripped of every moveable it contained. Every glass case and valuable ornament would be either stolen or wantonly laid waste. It is curious to reflect, that, in religion, and in all the greater and more abstract of the moral virtues, we should be so much superior to the French, while they, almost without a vestige of sincere or rational religion, should throw us so entirely into the shade in respect of one of the first and most practical of our duties to one another.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

JOHN DRYDEN.*

THIS celebrated English poet was born, Aug. 1631, in the parsonage-house of Oldwinkle, near Oundle, being one of the fourteen children of Mr Erasmus Driden of Tichmarsh, who was in his turn a younger son of Sir Erasmus Driden of Canons-Ashby, at one time high sheriff of Northamptonshire. The young poet was educated as a king's scholar at Westminster school, under the famous pedagogue Busby, and in his nineteenth year was transferred to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he afterwards took the degree of bachelor. Leaving college in 1657, he entered the world with a trifling patrimony left by his deceased father, and the patronage of his uncle Sir John Driden and his cousin Sir Gilbert Pickering, who were zealous friends of the then reigning Protector. His first poetical effort of any note was an elegy on the death of Cromwell, which he probably wrote in some measure under the influence of feelings assumed out of deference to these relations, as at the restoration of Charles II., which took place soon after, he adopted that tone of deference to "legitimate monarchy," from which he never afterwards could be tempted to depart. When about thirty years of age, he is found trusting himself to fortune in London, as a poet by profession, commencing his career by poems addressed in the usual complimentary language of those days to the king and the Chancellor Clarendon. At the time we speak of, a fashion somewhat like one which still prevails in the East, existed in the higher circles of British society. This was to give presents of money where there was a desire of obtaining favour. Thus the corporation of Hull is found backing a polite address to their governor the Duke of Monmouth with six broad pieces, which his grace deemed it a point of civility to press upon the member of parliament for the city (honest Andrew Marvell), by whom it was presented. If gentlemen and nobles thought such gifts not beneath their dignity, it is not to be supposed that poets even of Dryden's pretensions deemed it nothing derogatory to accept a few guineas in exchange for a complimentary poem. Nay, it appears that Dryden, for the greater part of his life, took regular fees for such things, as also for dedications, elegies, and epithalamiums, even a prologue for a brother poet's play being charged at two guineas. When the subject of this memoir commenced his literary career, it is said, notwithstanding his gentlemanly birth and education, that he "took up with a lodging which had a window no bigger than a pocket looking-glass, dined at a threepenny ordinary, enough to starve a vacation tailor, kept little company, went clad in homely drugged, and drank wine as seldom as the grand seignior's confessor"—a faithful portrait, no doubt, of a poor author of the year 1660.

From the worst evils of poverty Dryden was soon relieved, however, by the patronage of a few men of fortune who possessed a taste for letters, particularly Sir Robert Howard, a younger son of the Earl of Berkeley. Another and better source of emolument at the same time opened to him. The theatre, after having been suppressed for nearly twenty years by the Puritans, was now re-erected under the auspices of royalty, and frequented by all who aspired at a character for either loyalty or taste. The players, however, did not revert to the highly poetical though irregular, and in some respects coarse, drama which had flourished in the hands of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher. The king and his courtiers, vitiated by their residence on the Continent, demanded the production of a new set of plays fashioned in the style which was there triumphant—the tragedies being heroic and stilted absurdities in

rhyme, after the manner of Racine and Corneille, while the comedies were filled with the wild intrigue, bustle, and licentiousness of the Spanish school. To produce dramas of these kinds and for these purposes now became the degrading task of this bright-minded man. His first dramatic work was the comedy of the Wild Gallant, acted in February 1662-3 by the company called the King's Servants, which was under the direction of the celebrated Killgrew, and performed in Drury Lane. Though the play met with only partial success, he produced in the same year his tragedy of the Rival Ladies, which met with a better reception. His next employment was to aid Sir Robert Howard in writing the tragedy of the Indian Queen, which was in the rhymed heroic style just alluded to, and presented battles and sacrifices, demons singing in the air, and the god of dreams descending through a trap, and ended with the mutual assassination of all the characters except one. This one, Montezuma, Dryden made the link of connection between the Indian Queen and a new tragedy entirely by himself, styled the Indian Emperor, of which the other characters were the sons and daughters of those who had been slain in the preceding play. Both of these tragedies were highly successful, and the poet accordingly advanced into more comfortable circumstances. An aged correspondent of the Gentleman's Magazine in 1745 relates that he remembered "plain John Dryden in one uniform clothing of Norwich drugged," and, after his improved fortunes, when he had "advanced to a sword and a Chadeux wig," had "eaten tarts with him and Madam Reeve at the Mulberry Garden." Being recommended not only by literary reputation, but a rather handsome person, he gained the affections of Lady Elizabeth Howard, eldest daughter of the Earl of Berkeley, and sister of his friend Sir Robert, whom he married in 1665.

"So honourable a connection," says Sir Walter Scott, "might have been expected to have advanced our author's prospects in a degree beyond what he experienced; but his father-in-law was poor, considering his rank, and had a large family, so that the portion of Lady Elizabeth was inconsiderable. Nor was her want of fortune supplied by patronage or family influence. What was worst of all, the parties did not find mutual happiness in the engagement they had formed. It is difficult for a woman of a violent temper and weak intellects, and such the lady seems to have been, to endure the apparently causeless fluctuation of spirits incident to one doomed to labour incessantly in the feverish exercise of the imagination. Unintentional neglect, and the inevitable relaxation, or rather sinking of spirit, which follows violent mental exertion, are easily misconstrued into capricious rudeness or intentional offence; and life is embittered by mutual accusation, not the less intolerable because reciprocally just. The wife of one who is to gain his livelihood by poetry, or by any labour (if any there be) equally exhausting, must either have taste enough to relish her husband's performances, or good nature sufficient to pardon his infirmities. It was Dryden's misfortune that Lady Elizabeth had neither the one nor the other; and I dismiss the disagreeable subject by observing, that on no one occasion when a sarcasm against matrimony could be introduced, has our author failed to season it with such bitterness as spoke an inward consciousness of domestic misery."

One or two other successful plays raised the reputation of Dryden so much, that, in 1668, on the death of Sir William Davenant, he was appointed poet-laureate, an office to which the salary of one hundred pounds and a pipe of wine had been attached since the days of Ben Jonson. Some time earlier, he made a compact with the King's Servants, whereby, in consideration of the profits of a share and a quarter of their theatre, amounting to about three hundred pounds a-year, he bound himself to furnish them with no fewer than three new plays per annum as long as the bargain should continue. Though he never was able to provide above half the number of plays, he is said to have for some time during this period enjoyed a literary income of about five or six hundred pounds, equal to fifteen hundred in the present day. He had now, moreover, appeared as a prose writer, in an Essay on Dramatic Poesy, and thereby had added considerably to his laurels: this piece is remarkable as the first example of any thing like light or elegant prose literature in the language. His success, however, had in the meantime called up enemies and detractors, and, in 1671, his literary character was burlesqued in the farce of the Rehearsal, the production chiefly of that erratic genius the Duke of Buckingham. The ridicule here successfully thrown upon the heroic plays had the good effect of putting an end to the popularity of those fantastic and unnatural productions, which Dryden soon after ceased to compose. He was the more forcibly called upon to abandon this line of composition by the success which attended a play of the heroic kind, entitled the Empress of Morocco, the composition of a wretched scribbler named Elkanah Settle. Through the efforts of the Earl of Rochester, who had contracted an enmity to Dryden, Settle's tragedy was acted with great applause before the members of the court, and then introduced, with the sanction of that influential body, to the public, by whom for some time it was well received. When Dryden saw that "nonsense with the appearance of sense," as he described Settle's poetry, succeeded as well as his own heroic dramas, which at the worst he thought "sense with the appearance of

* This article is abridged with considerable care from the Life of Dryden prefixed to an edition of the works of the poet by Sir Walter Scott, and recently republished in the cheap edition of the Miscellaneous Works of the latter author; Cadell, Edinburgh, 1834. We take this opportunity of recommending Mr Cadell's publication to the notice of our readers: it offers, in a most elegant form, and at a very low price, a series of writings of greater literary importance and interest than the public seems to be generally aware of.

nonsense," he determined to write no more in that vein. Unfortunately, Dryden was so much a dependent on fashionable taste, that he could not resist feeling deeply aggrieved by the success of his paltry rival, and allowed himself to be dragged into a squabble with that individual, in which, Sir Walter Scott says very happily, he could no more expect to be a gainer than a well-dressed man who should condescend to wrestle with a chimney-sweep. The wits of that time, notwithstanding the general tone of good humour and frivolity which characterised both them and a great part of the public, prosecuted literary warfare with a savageness of acrimony of which we have now no example. They attacked each other with the undisguised bitterness of mortal enemies, reflected on every unfavourable circumstance in the lives of their antagonists, and were not above even the mean expedient of making natural infirmities, nay, unavoidable misfortunes, the subject of ridicule and reproach. While it is to be stated to the honour of Dryden that he manifested more good nature in these affairs than many of his antagonists, and was by no means of a vindictive temper, it is equally to be regretted that a man of his transcendent genius, destined to be remembered and admired, while most of his contemporaries had sunk into oblivion, should have permitted his life to be embittered by the rivalry and rancour of such individuals when alive. A well-directed self-respect might be expected to guard literary men from such troubles, instead of plunging them into them—at least if accompanied by placable and kindly dispositions.

The Earl of Rochester, so noted for his profligacy and wit, had originally been a patron of Dryden; but something had occurred to divide them, and the circumstance of the poet being still the friend of the Earl of Mulgrave, to whom Rochester bore a deadly grudge, and his having had some concern in revising a satirical poem of Mulgrave, in which Rochester was rather severely castigated, caused the latter nobleman to resolve upon a step which will ever be considered as one of the most infamous transactions in his infamous life. "Upon the night of the 18th December 1679," says Sir Walter Scott, "Dryden was waylaid by hired ruffians, and severely beaten, as he passed through Rose Street, Covent Garden, returning from Will's coffeehouse to his own house in Gerard Street. A reward of £50 was in vain offered in the London Gazette and other newspapers for the discovery of the perpetrators of this outrage. The town was, however, at no loss to pitch upon Rochester as the employer of the bravoes, with whom the public suspicion joined the Duchess of Portsmouth, equally concerned in the supposed affront thus avenged. In our time, were a nobleman to have recourse to hired bravoes to avenge his personal quarrel against any one, more especially a person holding the rank of a gentleman, he might lay his account with being hunted out of society. But in the age of Charles, the ancient high and chivalrous sense of honour was esteemed Quixotic, and the civil war had left traces of ferocity in the manners and sentiments of the people. Rencontres where the assailants took all advantages of number and weapons, were as frequent, and held as honourable, as duels." When we find the king himself, with all his gay humour, sending an obnoxious nobleman upon an expedition to Tangiers in a leaky vessel, in order that he might be drowned, and Sir John Coventry, a Whig member of Parliament, set upon by ruffians at night, and slit in the nose, for some anti-royalist reflections in the House of Commons, we cannot wonder at Rochester, who was a noted coward, taking this revenge upon Dryden. Not many years after, when Count Comminges was tried for the barbarous assassination, by bravoes, of Mr Thynne, in the streets of London, he allowed that the crime was a stain upon his blood, but such an one as a good action in the wars, or a lodging on a counterscarp, would easily wash out!

In 1678, Dryden produced his tragedy of *All for Love*, on the story of Antony and Cleopatra. This is almost the only tragedy by our author that still keeps possession of the stage, if any good play in five acts can now be said to do so. It was the first of the kind in which Dryden gave up the heroic couplets of his earlier tragedies, and reverted to the blank verse which both earlier and later poets have deemed essential to this branch of the drama. His most successful comedy, the *Spanish Friar*, came out in 1681, and was addressed in some measure to the passions of the populace of that day, which were inflamed in the most violent manner against the Catholics. This circumstance Dryden lived to regret. His prevailing leanings in politics were, even at this time, of a different kind, as was shown by his celebrated poem, *Absalom and Achitophel*, which appeared in November that year, being a satire of the most exquisite point and brilliancy against the Whig party, who chiefly kept up the insane cry against the members of the church of Rome.

Soon after the accession of James II., Dryden concluded a life of religious uncertainty and indifference by embracing the Catholic faith; a step which certainly squared with his interest, and procured from the king a considerable addition to his salary, but which is nevertheless allowed by his biographers to have resulted as much from sincere conviction as any other motive. The prosperity he thus enjoyed was not of long duration. Immediately after the Revolution, he was removed from his places of poet-lau-

reate and historiographer-royal, which, with £300 a-year, were conferred on his contemptible rival, Shadwell. He was thus reduced to an advanced period of life to considerable distress, and once more had to apply himself to the drudgery of writing for the stage. One of the plays which he produced under these circumstances was his *Don Sebastian*, which is considered the best of all his tragedies. With *Love Triumphant*, however, the twenty-seventh of his dramatic productions, which appeared in 1694, terminated his exertions for the stage. The remainder of his life was chiefly spent in writing miscellaneous poems, and in translating into English verse the works of the Roman classics. His translation of Virgil appeared in 1697, and is only blameable as containing too much of the original genius of the translator. It was also at this period of his life that Dryden composed his splendid Ode for St Cecilia's Day. Though politically depressed, he still maintained that pre-eminence over all his contemporaries which was due to one who had reformed the poetry of his age, and originated at least one department of its prose. After spending the early part of the day at his studies, and dining with his family, he used to proceed to Will's coffeehouse in Russell Street, Covent Garden, where a particular chair, by the fire in winter, and near the balcony in summer, awaited him, and where men of taste congregated around him, emulous of even the honour of a pinch from his box, and anxious to hear his opinion upon every question of taste that arose. The house of the poet was in Gerard Street, the fifth on the left hand coming from Little Newport Street (now marked No. 43), and with the back-windows looking upon the gardens of Leicester House. There he died, May 1, 1700, of the consequences of a gangrene in the leg, leaving a reputation which, though clouded by a few errors, will ever be held as one of the most brilliant in English literature.

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN.

[BY ELIA.]

It is now six-and-thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing-lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-time, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school-days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to any thing. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over—no busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour, and lively expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look any thing but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence, and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thralldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my later years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were, and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L—, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure: that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock), I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought, now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L—, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me; when, to my utter astonishment, B—, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time. (The deuce, thought I, how did he find out that?) I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!) and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever.

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastille, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. I was like passing out of time into eternity—for it is a sort of eternity for a man to have his time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my possessions; I wanted some steward or judicious bailiff to manage my estates in time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do not walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a-day, to make the most of them. If time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do not read in that violent measure, with which, having no time my own but candle-light time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in by-gone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me.

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For that is the only true time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the counting-house. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk, the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly.

Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long; for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your

leave. Farewell, Ch—, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do—, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl—, officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington of old, stately House of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding pent-up offices, where candles for one half the year supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.*

THE SEASON WHICH HAS PASSED AWAY.

THE season of Autumn—the period of the fall of the leaf—has excited the remarks of innumerable writers, with the view of drawing an analogy betwixt its character and the changeableness of human affairs. That which has been composed on this topic by British writers is already well known; but the following beautifully expressed observations of Pierpont, an American author, have not hitherto been published in this country, and may here be given as an example of purity of feeling and style in trans-Atlantic literature:—

"The earth, and all that dwell upon the face of it, speak a language that is in mournful and melancholy accordance with that of an apostle—'The fashion of this world passeth away.' A testimony, thus concurrent, is solemn, and we cannot distrust it. It is eloquent, and we cannot but feel it. We are wise if we open our eyes and our ears to the evidence which nature gives to the truths of revelation, and labour, that we may impress distinctly and deeply upon our minds the moral lessons which that evidence is calculated to enforce.

The mournful but gentle voice of Autumn invites us forth, that we may see, for ourselves, how the fashion of this world is passing away, in regard to the dress in which it so lately presented itself to our view. The gardens and the groves—how are they changed! The deep verdure of their leaves is gone. The many-coloured woodland, which but a few weeks since was arrayed in a uniform and lively green, now presents a gaudier show indeed, but one of which all the hues are sickly, and are all but the various forms of death. In the garden, the brown and naked stalk has succeeded to the broad blossoms of summer, as they had, but lately, to the young leaves and swelling buds of spring. The orchards, that but a few short months ago were white with promise, and that loaded with perfume the very winds that visited them, are now resigning their faded leaves and their mellow fruit.

The wayfaring man who contemplates these changes that present themselves to his eye, in Nature's dress, cannot be insensible that her voice has also changed. To his ear there is something more religious in the whisper of the winds, something more awful in their roar; and even the waters of the brook have changed their tone, and go by him with a hollow murmur. And how soon shall all these things be changed again! The course of the stream shall be checked. Its voice shall be stifled by the snows, in which the earth shall wrap herself during her long and renovating sleep of winter.

In these respects the fashion of the world passeth away, we will not say with every year, but with each successive season of every year. Their general effect is moral and highly salutary. In them all we hear a voice, which speaks to us what we may not, and what we cannot, speak to one another. They are full of gentle, faithful admonitions, and remind us that 'we, too, shall all be changed.' Yet these are changes in the fashion of this world, which, from their very frequency, lose a part of their effect. The fashions which pass away with the departing seasons, we know will be brought back again, when the same seasons return; and those scenes which we know will be again presented, we believe that we shall live to witness and enjoy.

But there are alterations in the fashion of the world, which time is more slow in producing, and which, when we witness them, are more striking, more melancholy, and of more abiding influence. Who will doubt this? for who has not felt it? and who is he that has ever felt, and has now forgotten it? Surely not you, my friend. Did you, in your young manhood, leave your home among the hills, the scenes and the companions of your youthful sports, or of your earliest toils? Were you long struggling with a wayward fortune, in distant lands, or in seas that rolled under the line, or that encircled the poles in their cold embrace? Did sickness humble the pride of your manhood, or did care whiten your temples before the time?

How often, in your wanderings, did the peaceful image of your home present itself to your mind? How often did you visit that sacred spot, in your dreams by night! and how faithful to your last impressions was the garb in which, when you were far away, your long forsaken home arrayed itself! The fields and the forests that were around it underwent no change in

their appearance to your imagination. The trees, that had given you fruit or shade, continued to give the same fruits and the same shade to the inmates of your paternal dwelling; and even in those objects of filial or fraternal affection, no change appeared to have been wrought by time, during your long absence.

But when at length you return, how different is the scene that comes before you in its melancholy reality, from that which you left in your youth, and of which a faithful picture has been carried near to your heart, in all your wanderings! Those who were once your neighbours and schoolfellows, and whom you meet, as you come near to your father's house, either you do not recognise, or you are grieved that they do not recognise you.

More melancholy still are the witnesses that meet you as you enter your father's house. She on whose bosom you hung in your infancy, and whom you had hoped once more to embrace, has long been sleeping in the dark and narrow house. Your father's form, how changed! Of the locks that clustered around his brow, how few remain! and those few, how thin! how white! His full-toned and manly voice has lost its strength, and trembles as he inquires if this is indeed his son. The sister whom you left a child is now a wife, and a mother; the wife of one whom you never knew, one who looks upon you as a stranger, and one towards whom it is impossible for you to kindle up a brother's love, now that you have found so little in the scenes of your childhood to satisfy the affectionate anticipations with which you returned to them.

While you are contemplating these melancholy changes, and the chill of disappointment is going through your heart, the feeling comes upon you, in all its bitterness, that the mournful ravages which time has wrought upon the scenes and the objects of your attachment, will not, and cannot, be repaired by time, in any of his future rounds. Returning years can furnish you with no proper objects for the fresh and glowing affections of youth; and even if those objects could be furnished, it is too late now for you to feel for them the correspondent affection. The song of your mountain-stream can never more soothe your ear. The grove that you loved shall invite you to meditation and to worship no more. Another may indeed spring up in its place, but you shall not live to see it. It may shade your grave, but your heart shall never feel its charm.

Your affections are robbed of the treasures to which they clung so closely and so long, and that for ever. The earth, where it had appeared most lively, is changed. The things that were nearest to your heart have changed with it. The fashion in which the world was arrayed, when it took hold on you with the strongest attachment, has passed away; its mysterious power to charm you has fled; all its holiest enchantments are broken, and you feel that nothing remains as it was, but the abiding outline of its surface—its valleys, where the still waters find their way, and the stern visage of its everlasting hills.

Nor does the fashion of the world pass away in regard to the ever-varying appearances of its exterior alone, its vegetable productions, that flourish and fade with every year, or those that endure for ages, beyond the utmost limit of animal life. It is indeed an eloquent commentary, to see the oak, that shaded one generation of men after another, even before it had attained its maturity, and in the fulness of its strength had stretched forth its giant arms over many succeeding generations, yield to decay at last, and fall, of its own weight, after having gloried in its strength for centuries.

It is an eloquent commentary, to see the fashion of those things passing away, in which the proudest efforts of human skill or human power have been displayed; to see the curious traveller inquiring and searching upon the banks of the Euphrates for the site of ancient Babylon, or measuring the huge masses of rock that composed the temple of the sun at Palmyra, or digging in the valley of the Nile, to bring to light the stupendous relics of ancient architecture, that have for thousands of years been buried in the sands of the desert.

But not the products of the earth, nor yet the works of man, alone change and pass away. In many particulars, the great mass of earth itself is liable to change, and has been moulded into different forms. Hills have been sunk beneath the depths of the sea, and the depths of the sea, in their turn, have been laid bare, or thrown up into stupendous mountains. Of most of these wonderful changes, it is true, history gives us no account. But that they have occurred, the deep places of the earth, its hardest rocks, its gigantic hills, alike bear witness.

In a moral, not less than in a physical sense, the fashion of this world passeth away. The passions of mankind, it is true, remain the same in their general character; but in different ages and nations, under different systems of morals, philosophy, and religion, they are subjected to a very different discipline, and are directed towards different objects. But if we except his general moral nature, what is there in man, in which the caprices of fashion are not continually displayed?

If, then, the beauties of the year are so fading, and its bounties so soon perish; if the loveliest scenes of nature lose their power to charm, and a few revolving years break the spell that binds us to those whom we love best; if the very figure of the earth is changed

by its own convulsions; if the forms of human government, and the monuments of human power and skill, cannot endure; if nothing on 'the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth,' preserves its form unchanged, what is there that remains for ever the same? What is there, over which autumnal winds and wintry frosts have no power?—what, that does not pass away, while we are contending with wayward fortune, or struggling with calamity?—what, that is proof against the fluctuations of human opinion, and the might of ocean's waves, and the convulsions by which mountains are heaved up from the abyss, or thrown from their deep foundations?

It is the God by whom these mighty works are done; by whose hand this great globe was first moulded, and has ever since been fashioned according to his will. To him, then, we can go, and to him let us go, in a filial assurance that there is no variableness in him. Though the glories of the year fade, though our young affections are blighted, and our expectations from this world are disappointed, we know that he has the power to make all these melancholy scenes of salutary influence, and conducive to our welfare. Though the opinions of the world, and our own opinions in respect to him, may change, there is no change in the love with which he regards and for ever embraces us. God passeth not away, nor do his laws. Those laws require that we, and all that is around us, should change and pass away. Those laws govern us, and will do so for ever. They bind us to our highest good. Then let us yield them a prompt and a perpetual obedience.*

INSTINCTS OF NATURE.

As nature has endued physical bodies with peculiar properties, such as gravity, attraction, and the like, so has she bestowed others on animal bodies, and, if I may be allowed the expression, incorporated the most essential maxims of her wisdom into living machines, just as an artist makes an automaton that performs certain human actions, but in other respects can do no more than any other machine. The whole animal kingdom is full of instances of this sort. It is not out of respect, as every reader will easily believe, that a certain beetle described by naturalists buries the dead moles and toads which it finds, but the instinct which teaches it to subside upon those animals, and to deposit its eggs in them, impels it to this action.

The pigeons which are trained to carry letters to distant places are not more sensible than other pigeons: nothing but the blind instinct to return to their young governs them in this proceeding. It is requisite that they should have left young at the place to which they are to fly; and lest they should take a fancy to stop by the way to drink or to wash themselves, their feet are dipped at their departure in vinegar. The solan geese in St Kilda steal, as Martin informs us, the grass out of one another's nests, not for the sake of stealing, but because they pick up grass wherever they find it, to form a soft depository for their eggs; and as these geese live together in flocks of many thousands, they find it every where in the nests of their companions. Highly as Ulloa extols the almost human caution and intelligence manifested by the mules in America in descending the lofty mountains, yet a closer examination will show that it is nothing but the fear of falling at the sight of the precipices which occasions all their caution, without any farther consideration. If at Lima they stand with their legs wide apart when they hear a subterranean rumbling, this proves nothing more than an habitual mechanical action acquired by frequent repetition; because when the earth shakes, they are obliged to assume a firmer position with their burdens, and they take the noise and the earthquake for one and the same thing, since the one invariably accompanies the other. Such is the real history of the supposed intelligence and cunning of animals. Nature must have known how far it was necessary for the skill which she conferred on animal bodies to extend, in order to the attainment of the purposes of self-preservation, self-defence, and the propagation of their kind. So much is certain, that all these instincts have their appointed limits, beyond which no animal can go; and hence it is that the animals, so long as they follow their instincts, perform actions of apparently astonishing intelligence, but in other respects are so stupid as not to manifest the slightest trace of cunning in their operations.

A hen, whose providence and perseverance we admire, when she lays her eggs in some sequestered spot, where she sits on and turns them, and almost sacrifices herself in her attention to them, bestows the same pains on a lump of chalk which is put under her. She leads her chickens about, that they may learn to scratch up the ground, and to seek worms and insects. At the same time she will tread upon one of them, and affrighted at the cries which the pain extorts from it, she clucks to warn and to soothe it; but yet she has not the sense to raise her foot and to set it at liberty. A lobster will, with inconceivable dexterity, snap off his leg when one of his fellows seizes it with his claw; but if you put one of his legs between his own claw, he will not have the sense to open his claw and to remove his leg, but breaks it off, as if there was no other method of releasing himself. The ostrich hatches her eggs, as it would appear, for the purpose of having young ostriches; she nevertheless quits them for every trifle, and leaves them to perish; nay, she will even break most of them herself, for the purpose of feeding with them the young ones which she already has.

* From "The Last Essays of Elia; being a Sequel to Essays published under last name." London, Moxon, 1832.

This bird has, moreover, the silly instinct to swallow every thing that comes in its way, without discriminating, like other animals, whether it is hurtful to it or not. An ostrich swallowed, in Shaw's presence, several leaden bullets hot from the mould. It will greedily devour its own excrements and those of other birds, and of course manifests not the least choice in obeying the instinct of appetite.

The crocodile would multiply with dangerous rapidity were it not so stupid as to devour its own young, according to the testimony of Ulloa. Thus, too, the male tiger destroys its own species in its young; and it is observed of one of the bug family, that the female is obliged to use the greatest precaution to defend her eggs and her young from the male. The ascent and descent of larks are the result of an instinct implanted in those birds, which they follow without any consideration; for they do the very same over the sea as upon land, and hence frequently perish in the water. A thousand other examples of this kind might be adduced. They prove that these actions, which seem to manifest so much intelligence, are but the actions of a machine, adapted to certain particular purposes, and that to those purposes alone this apparent intelligence extends.—*New Monthly Magazine.*

UNION OF NEWSPAPERS.

AMONG all the fallacies that exist, there is perhaps none so utterly ridiculous as that which is understood by a "union of newspapers." It is a very common practice, when a newspaper does not prove, or ceases to be, a profitable concern, to unite it, as the phrase goes, to another. The real nature of such a transaction is, we believe, simply this:—One paper in great need of readers, buys, for a consideration, the smaller subscription-list of an expiring contemporary, in the hope that a few of the readers of the latter will transfer their patronage to itself. In other words, the proprietors of a moribund newspaper sell their subscription-list at the same time perhaps that they are selling their printing materials, desk, and other paraphernalia, for what it will bring, knowing they cannot make a better of it. Such a transaction is quite fair: if one proprietor should think the chance of obtaining a few new readers worth a certain sum of money, no one can say that he is not entitled to make the purchase. The fallacy, however, lies in the gloss which is put upon the transaction. The public is gravely informed that the Independent is henceforth incorporated with the Post: incorporated is the word. The Post is therefore, we are assured, the Post no longer; it is the Post and Independent. Not the slightest distension is remarked in the figure of the Post, after this coalition. It is to all intents and purposes the same paper as formerly. The public, however, catches up the phraseology of the announcement, and repeats it with as much gravity as that with which it was first stated. "What is come of the Independent?" inquires Citizen First. "Oh, it is incorporated with the Post," answers Citizen Second. Now I must confess that all this seems to my understanding as so much nonsense. If there were any appearance of a binty of papers,

"Two great single gentlemen rolled into one,"

if even the editors of the Independent were to be retained in the Post, there might be some shadow of sense in the idea. But the phrase is used in cases where the whole transaction consists, as just stated, in the sale of a few gentlemen's names, as individuals who, having formerly taken the Independent, may now take the Post.

The bare fact is, that the Independent is a defunct paper—is independent no longer. Its proprietors saw it could not continue to exist without serious injury to their fortune, and they resolved to drop it. To give up an enterprise, however, in which they had formerly been sanguine, and which they had assured every body was succeeding extremely well, was not agreeable to their self-love, and not very likely to redound to their credit as men of the world. Therefore they resolved to pretend that their paper was not to be given up. No, no; we are only going to join with the Post—a paper, you know, quite kindred with our own in political sentiment. But that the Independent goes out of existence in this transaction, is, we hold, as clear as that Julius Cæsar died some eighteen hundred years ago. If it be not dead, where is it? Show it to me in a living form. "Oh, its name is to be seen under the title of the Post." Why, that is only its epitaph. A man might as well give in a reclaiming petition against the stroke of death, and have his friends to pretend, after he had been quietly inurned, that he yet lived in the person of a friend, who had kindly undertaken to tag his name to his own.

ABSTINENCE.

The period which persons may subsist without taking any food, varies considerably according to their mental and physical condition; in general, where there is much mental anxiety, there is less necessity for food being supplied. In the records of the Tower of London, a curious case is detailed of one Cicely de Ridgeway, who, in the reign of Edward III., having been condemned for the murder of her husband, remained forty days without food or drink; which circumstance was considered so miraculous, that she was granted a free pardon by the king. The probability is, that this woman was surreptitiously supplied with food, there being evidently a sufficient object for at-

tempting such an imposition. But certainly, in cases of shipwreck, privation at sea, imprisonment, and insanity, persons have lived a long time without taking food. Death from hunger occurs sooner in the young and robust than in the older and sparer subject. Dr Thackrah refers to the case of a girl, aged sixteen, who recovered after remaining eleven days without food, under the ruins of a house at Oppido: a child of five or six months old, however, which she had in her arms, died on the fourth day. He also refers to the case of the unfortunate Count Tigolino, who, having been condemned to perish by hunger, was confined with his four sons in the dungeon of a tower, the key of which was then thrown into the river Arno. It is stated that the wretched parent witnessed the death of his youngest child on the fourth day, then of the others, himself sinking on the eighth, "victims of the most execrable vengeance ever recorded in the history of man."

A MARRYING MAN.

Never warn me, my dear, to take care of my heart,
When I dance with you Lancer, so fickle and smart;
What phantoms the mind of eighteen can create,
That boast not a charm at discreet twenty-eight;
A partner, 'tis true, I would gladly command,
But that partner must boast of wealth, house, and land;
I have looked round the ball-room, and try what I can,
I fail to discover one Marrying Man?

Time was, in the pride of my girlhood's bright dawn,
All but talented men I regarded with scorn,
Wits, authors, and artists, then teased me about,
Who might each have passed muster at Lady Cork's rout;
In duets, I had always a second well skilled;
My album with sonnets and sketches was filled;
I went on the brink "march of intellect" plan,
But the "march" countermarched every Marrying Man!
How oft, when mamma would give counsels impart,
Have I pouted and wept at her hardness of heart;
She cared not for genius—her idol was self;
Now I've grown just as icy and hard as herself.
Alike I am rock to the handsome and wise,
To wit and to waiting, to singing and sighs;
Nay, Phæbus himself would come under my ban
For he certainly is not a Marrying Man!
Finding London a failure, I varied my path,
I "took tea" with the painted old ladies of Bath;
At Hastings, the hills laboured panting to reach;
At Ramsgate, sat out with a book on the beach;
At Cheltenham, walk'd to the band's matin sound;
At Brighton, "mised aim" on the archery ground;
Through each place pointed out by the "Guide" have I ran,
But the Guide would not point to one Marrying Man!
That object seems still the philosopher's stone,
Another "ninth statue," a new "Great Unknown";
I have tried all the schemes and manoeuvres of old,
And must strike out some measure decisive and bold.
I'll try a deep plan in the diving-bell soon,
Or, with Green's assistance, I'll visit the moon!
Yes, yes—sure the last's an infallible plan,
If the "Man in the Moon" be—A MARRYING MAN!

—*Comic Offering*, 1835.

CURIOUS FACT REGARDING EGGS.

There is a curious fact connected with eggs, which is, that even hens which are kept in the same poultry-yard, and fed on the same food, produce eggs differing in the tints of their shells, some being much darker than others. Hens sometimes produce eggs with a double yolk, and others have been found with a double shell. It is a curious and interesting fact, that the spot on the upper surface of the yolk of an egg, being that in which the future chick is situated, is so much lighter than the opposite side, that, in whatever position the egg may be placed, this part is always opposite to the belly of the incubating hen. Jesse says, "Another wonderful fact respecting eggs is, that some birds have the property of either retaining their egg after it has arrived at maturity, or of suppressing altogether the future progress of those eggs which had arrived at a certain size in the ovary. I have on several occasions purchased pullets for my farm-yard which had just begun to lay. Perhaps on their way to their new home they would drop one egg in the basket in which they were confined, but I have invariably found, that, on arriving at a strange place, they have altogether ceased to lay any more eggs till they had become habituated to their companions, and had made themselves acquainted with the localities of their new situation. We know, on opening a pullet which has just begun to lay, that there is a regular succession of eggs of different sizes in the ovary. Some are nearly complete, others are as large as a marble, and others the size of a pea. The circumstance of birds being endowed with the extraordinary property of preventing the eggs from arriving at maturity, when their usual habits or place of abode have been changed, is one of those facts in natural history on which little light has yet been thrown. If the leg of a pullet is broken after she has laid two or three eggs, and she is thus prevented from seeking enough of that substance which is necessary to be taken into the stomach with their food, for the purpose of encrusting the egg, she will perhaps drop one without a shell, and then cease altogether from laying any more till the bones of her leg are knit, and she is able to go about as usual. She then begins to lay again, but the number is regulated by those she had previously laid. Suppose, for instance, that she had laid four eggs before her leg was broken, and that the quantity in her ovary when she first began was sixteen, she would, when she resumed her laying, only produce the remaining twelve. From this it is clear that a certain quantity of some material, lime and chalk pro-

bably, is necessary to enable a hen to produce a perfect egg, and that the want of it retards the process going on in the ovary, without producing any immediate injury to those eggs which were in a gradual process towards maturity."

PARMAZAN CHEESE.

Parmazan cheese is a valuable Italian production and is formed in the following manner:—Two evening meals of milk, after standing for sixteen hours, and a morning's meal after it has stood six hours, are mixed together, consisting of about seventy English gallons. These are placed in a large copper vessel, suspended over a slow fire made of wood. The milk is frequently stirred, and in the course of an hour allowed to reach the temperature of eighty-two degrees. A ball of rennet, the size of a walnut, is then placed in a cloth, and squeezed through it into the milk, while it is constantly stirred. It is removed from the fire, and coagulation ensues in about an hour. The curd is then well stirred up, and permitted to stand till the whey has separated. In about an hour after, the curd is wrought by means of a stick armed with cross wires, in which process it is reduced into small pieces, and left till the whey has completely subsided. Part of the whey is then taken off, and the copper again placed on the fire. It is now brought to a heat nearly approaching the boiling point, and a quarter of an ounce of saffron is mixed with it, while the curd is constantly stirred with a wooden spatula, to prevent it from singeing. The superintendent examines it, by rubbing it betwixt his fingers from time to time, to ascertain when it has assumed sufficient tenacity. During this process the heat is raised to one hundred and twenty-four degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, and sometimes even so high as one hundred and thirty degrees. During this time it is permitted to remain about half an hour on the fire, when it is taken off, and the curd allowed to subside. About three-fourths of the remaining whey is then separated from it, and three or four gallons of cold water poured round the bottom of the vessel, to cool the curd so that it can be handled. It is raised from the bottom of the vessel, a cloth slipped under it, and then removed into a tub to clear. When properly drained, it is put into a hoop, and pressure equal to about half a hundred-weight is placed upon the top of it, and allowed to remain an hour in this state. The cloth is now removed, and the cheese again placed in the hoop, and afterwards laid on a shelf, where it must be turned every day for three days, and at the end of this period it is salted all over. This operation is repeated every day for the space of thirty days if in summer, and forty days if in winter, which completes the process, and finishes the making of the cheese. During the time of salting, two cheeses are placed above each other, which is supposed to facilitate the process. They are then scraped clean, rubbed every day with a cloth, and anointed with linseed oil to protect them against insects. They are not considered marketable till about six months old.—Would it not be worth while for Scotch and English dairy-keepers to try their hand at making this delicious kind of cheese?

NUMBER OF PLANTS.

According to Humboldt, the species of plants at present known amount to 44,000. Of these 6000 are *cryptogamous*, or having neither blossoms nor visible fructification; the remaining 38,000 are *phanerogamous* plants, or those which have visible organs of fructification, and are thus distributed:—

In Europe	7000
Temperate regions of Asia	1500
Asia within the tropics, and islands	4500
In Africa	3000
Both the temperate regions of America	4000
In America, between the tropics	13,000
New Holland and the islands of the Pacific	5000

He also states that the proportions of plants which grow in latitudes 0°, 45°, and 68°, to be as the numbers 12, 4, and 1. Within the tropics the *monocotyledonous* plants, or those having only one *cotyledon*, or seed-lobe, as the grass and corn tribe, palms, and the orchis family, are to the *dicotyledonous*, or those having two seed-lobes, as 1 to 6; between the latitudes 36° and 52°, as 1 to 4; and at the polar circle, as 1 to 2.

PLANETARY BODIES.

The following table shows a variety of particulars relative to the planetary bodies:—

Names.	Diameter in miles.	Distance from Sun in miles.	Period of revolution round axis.	Period of revolution round Sun.	No. of Satellites.
1 Mercury	3,900	37,000,000	24h. 5m.	88 days	None
2 Venus	8,640	68,000,000	23h. 20m.	224 days	None
3 Earth	7,912	95,000,000	24h.	365 days	One
4 Mars	4,200	144,000,000	24h. 40m.	1yr. 10mo.	None
5 Ceres	1,624	260,000,000	—	4yrs. 7mo.	None
6 Pallas	2,000	265,000,000	—	4yrs. 7mo.	None
7 Juno	1,425	253,000,000	—	4yrs. 4mo.	None
8 Vesta	—	225,000,000	—	3yrs. 6mo.	None
9 Jupiter	86,000	480,000,000	9h. 56m.	12yrs.	Four
10 Saturn	79,000	900,000,000	10h. 16m.	29yrs.	Seven
11 Herschel	35,000	1,900,000,000	—	83yrs. 5mo.	Six

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